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Dr. Joshua Lederberg, President
The Rockefeller University
1230 York Avenue
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Dear Josh:

Thank you for your recent warm hearted and gracious note. Indeed, like you, we love the Rockefeller University, and thus we should remark on what are probably obvious aspects of our little activity that you cite. Namely, it was but a gesture related to our long-time position that an eminent research university, the Rockefeller in particular, should have a dual or binary quality in its Board of Trustees. Thus, in addition to those in the traditional role of providing and marshalling resources for the Institution, there would be other trustees whose principal function would be as advocates of the academic and research progress of the Institution as a whole, including its relationships and standing in the national and international community of learning and discovery.

This dualism has been superbly, even uniquely, supported by the Rockefeller family in its founding and sponsorship of what is now the Rockefeller University. In some other universities, churches and their members have often played this non-funding part in private educational institutions. Lately, however, the trends in the nation have been toward more monolithic boards necessarily concerned with the strong economic demands of higher learning institutions and inevitably with the competition of important and necessary public systems of education and research. In all of these factors, as is very well known to you, the Rockefeller has sought to strike the best balance. But we have benefited especially, with your leadership and recognition of new challenges in bioscience, by seeking to keep and to emphasize a clear presence of those who were not prepared to make significant fiscal input, but who shared their time and efforts in these other missions.

Further, it is recognized that the appropriate balances of inputs are in these days demanding, with foundations as well as, of course, the Federal government having mostly the right dimensions, which do eventually show up in funding. (But through substantive pathways, the private "funding" needs are approached in size really only by the immense generousity of the Rockefeller family.)

However, despite these realities, we have seen a rather steady trend toward primarily financial expectations from the Board. These could grow, despite the skillful care and discretion of our development leadership and staff, into a "price of admission" situation. We hope, therefore, that some little gestures, especially when carrying a clear signal also of (Guggenheim) Foundation interest, would be sympathetically viewed in behalf of true dualism.

The Rockefeller is not the only place that faces this issue nowadays. Indeed, social and economic trends may point increasingly toward a substantial "price of admission to boards" trend. For the present, however, we cherish the "individually unfunded" relationships we have been permitted to serve over these decades, and, very particularly, the association with you in seeking to sustain the ideals of science and learning which our founders and sponsors have so steadily and wisely pursued.

Our development group has already found, however, that some such gestures as our little one were apparently required from each, in their broader quest from all. That, of course, is the way much of present society and economy are moving. But perhaps the other principle is also usefully represented by inclusion of the Guggenheim, which has added substantial sums to the laboratories of Professors Griffin, Winson and Ratliff in recent times.

So altogether, we welcome yet another occasion (of which there will be more in the times ahead) to thank you and to express gratitude for the mutual ideals we have pursued over the years. As we seek to explain our particular gestures toward the University, we think always of the warmth of our friendship. With personal esteem and best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

Bill